



Back Stage

No. 2 Jan. 1929

RAYMOND MOORE, Editor



SEASON TICKET ANNOUNCEMENT

Because of the great increase in the number of season ticket reservations for 1929 it has not yet been possible to make definite assignment of seats for our subscribers. All old subscribers, however, have been given the opportunity to retain the same reservations which they had for the summer of 1928; and all renewals and new reservations are being checked and rechecked several times for complete accuracy in the final allotment of seats. Notices of assignments will be sent out as soon as possible.

Over seven thousand tickets have already been purchased or reserved for next season,—or approximately one quarter of the seating capacity for every performance scheduled throughout the summer.

If you are an old subscriber and have not yet renewed, or if you plan to take out a subscription this coming season, you are requested to communicate at once with Miss Cora E. Fitzgerald, Subscription Secretary, Dennis, Massachusetts.

PERSONAL ITEMS



Basil Rathbone has left the cast of "The Command to Love" after playing the lead for a season in New York and then for many months on the road, and is about to begin rehearsals of "Judas" a play partly of his own authorship. The play is to be produced by Brady and Wiman.

Peggy Wood's new play, "A Play Without a Name," by Austin Strong goes one step further than O'Neill's "Strange Interlude" and instead of giving the real thoughts of the characters in asides to the audience, gives us several scenes supposed to take place in the brain of one of the characters. The eyes, ears, and nerve centers are all indicated, and human beings whisper or moan the thoughts of the character as they pull levers that resemble the gear shift of an automobile. The device is not altogether successful, and the scenes add little that cannot be surmised by the most casual or weak-minded observer.

Miss Wood does a brilliant piece of work, as the enthusiasm of the opening night audience testified. Fortunately she is not required to act in the other character's brain. Miss Wood is undoubtedly one of the finest actresses on the American stage today, and brings a spirituality and wholesomeness that is inspiring. In her present play, it is interesting to see how thoroughly she vitalizes the story every time she steps upon the stage.





Romney Brent, who played Marchbanks in the Cape Playhouse production of "Candida," is announced to play in "Daylight Savings."

Leo Carroll is playing in Charles Hopkins' production of A. A. Milne's mystery play, "The Perfect Alibi." The play is a hit and apparently will run the season.

"This Thing Called Love," featuring Minor Watson, continues to be one of the successes of the season. The play is a sophisticated comedy, in the modern manner, and Mr. Watson gives charm and humor to the part of the husband who is hired to be so in name, and then finds himself in love with his wife and wants to get off the salary list.

Janet Beecher's play, "Courage," still continues to be one of the steady successes of the season. Variety, the trade publication, lists it as having a great feminine draw.

Janne Burbie is giving a series of radio programs.

Maurice Burke, playing Captain Paul Leharsson in Helen Menken's play, "Congai," received especially good notices from the dramatic critics. The play has been playing to capacity ever since it opened.



CAPE PLAYHOUSE AUDIENCES

In a recent examination of records of the Cape Playhouse during its two seasons at Dennis a number of surprising facts came to light. One of the most gratifying of these is that the theory which we have worked upon, namely, that the Cape Playhouse audiences are exceptional, has now been actually proved by a study of box-office receipts.

Box-office receipts for both 1927 and 1928 show that our audiences prefer good plays to those that are usually presented by ordinary stock companies. Our gross receipts for *Candida*, *Mr. Pim Passes By*, and *The Silver Cord* were among the largest for the 1928 season; and *Outward Bound* and *Peter Ibbetson* were two of the 1927 productions most extensively patronized.

Of the purely popular plays, only *Meet the Wife* and *Wedding Bells* have ranked with the plays previously mentioned, and both these plays are unusually good of their kind.

These facts show that the Cape Playhouse audiences are of an exceptional type, with taste considerably above those of the average theatre audience. While the audiences are obviously cultured, it also has now been proved that they are more willing to pay for the highest type of plays than for mediocre entertainment.

CAPE PLAYHOUSE NOTES

Some of the theatrical, literary, and other notables of the artistic world who have visited the Cape Playhouse, most of them during the past season, are Winthrop Ames, Rosalie Stewart, Dudley Digges, Glenn Hunter, J. N. Behrman, Lawrence Langner, Helen Westley, Claudette Colbert, Percy Ames, John Golden, Mary Heaton Vorse, Susan Glaspell,

CAPE PLAYHOUSE NOTES—Continued

O. P. Heggie, Morgan Farley, Paul Robeson, Tod Lindenmuth, Stewart Baird, and Gerrit Beneker.

Of all the tickets sold in 1928, 32 2/3% were season tickets; and season ticket subscribers failed to use less than 1% of the tickets which they had purchased many months in advance. It is the common experience of organizations which have a large number of subscribers to find a great portion of the tickets left unused at the end of their season. Hence it would look as if Cape Playhouse patrons were pleased with the plays which were given, and also as if there were no "charity" subscriptions among our many hundreds of season ticket sales.

New stockholders since the last bulletin was issued are Mr. John W. Hornor of Wianno, Mr. A. Felix du Pont of Oyster Harbors, and Miss Margaret Wilson Golding of Hyannis. By next summer the Cape Playhouse hopes to have two hundred of the most prominent residents of Cape Cod as holders of its preferred stock. The beneficial effect of such widespread cooperation and support is incalculable.

The orange cushions placed in the theatre seats this past summer cost \$492. Up to the last week in August persons were still strolling in with pillows under their arms—with recollections of the preceding season still fresh—and almost invariably some slight embarrassment followed. The ushers were instructed to be as helpful as possible.

Chairs were also placed in the boxes the past season at a most of \$256. The previous season rented chairs were used.

Each weekly issue of the Cape Playhouse program costs about \$125. While this is much higher than is actually necessary, the theatre management feels that the quality of the program is distinctive and suitable to the class of patrons forming the audience. The Cape Playhouse also has turned down literally hundreds of ads, so that our patrons are not confronted with advertisements of fish, hot-dog stands, and patent medicines while their minds are absorbed with supposedly higher things.

The Cape Playhouse plans next summer to invite the dramatic critics of various New York and Boston newspapers and of many national magazines, to visit Dennis as guests of the theatre. Newspaper publicity of this sort has a triple value: it interests the critics in Cape Playhouse activities; it increases the interest and knowledge of the public, and directly increases the size of audiences; and it familiarizes the work of the theatre with professionals and makes it infinitely easier to obtain their services. The latter is an important consideration, as the Cape Playhouse is interested in obtaining the services of only the best artists in the theatre.

SOME NEW YORK PRODUCTIONS WORTH SEEING

JEALOUSY—with Fay Bainter. A two character play, with Miss Bainter doing an almost impossible task, and doing it brilliantly.

COURAGE—with Janet Beecher starred. A satisfying comedy-drama.

STRANGE INTERLUDE—one of O'Neill's best.

TONIGHT AT TWELVE—if you want to be amused.

THE WILD DUCK—Blanche Yurka in a splendid production of Ibsen.

BLACKBIRDS—a delightful all-negro entertainment.

THIS YEAR OF GRACE—the finest revue in many seasons. All-English.

THE FRONT PAGE—rough and ready melodrama of Chicago newspaper life in the '90's. An interesting example of ultra-modern directing and present day ideas of speed and atmosphere. If you are used to New York plays you may enjoy it; or you may be startled, if not.

A PLAY WITHOUT A NAME—Peggy Wood electrifying a fairly interesting theme.

THE HIGH ROAD—brilliant acting of a bad play.

HOLIDAY—a delightful comedy by Philip Barry, one of America's promising young dramatists.

THIS THING CALLED LOVE—sophisticated comedy.

A MOST IMMORAL LADY—Alice Brady doing a superb piece of acting at a telephone, and lacking a real vehicle for her genius.

PREFERRED STOCKHOLDERS

of the Cape Playhouse, Inc., to date

Mrs. Charles D. Armstrong	Mr. John Hinckley
Dr. Gorham Bacon	Mr. John W. Hornor
Mrs. Gorham Bacon	Miss Mary F. Hoyt
Mrs. Walter Baker	Mrs. George B. Johnson
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"Back Stage"

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